

California Historical Records Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2006

Location: Riverside County Assessor, County Clerk-Recorder Offices
Riverside, CA

Members Present: Gary Brutsch, Jim Hofer, Gary Kurutz, Waverly Lowell, Jennifer Martinez, Leslie Masunaga, Laren Metzger, Charles Palm, Chuck Wilson, Nancy Zimmelman

Members Absent: Pauline Grenbeaux, Hynda Rudd

Public Present: Larry Ward, Riverside County Assessor, County Clerk-Recorder, Marion Mitchell-Wilson, Executive Director, Riverside Public Library Foundation, Anne Ostendarp, Archives Manager, Riverside County Records Management and Archives Program, Tauna Mallis, Assistant Riverside County Assessor and County Clerk-Recorder, and Beth Crawford, Administrative Manager, Riverside County Records Management and Archives Program

The meeting was called to order by State Coordinator Nancy Zimmelman at 9:58 a.m. Nancy said that she had been informed that the Governor has appointed her as the State Coordinator although a copy of the appointment letter had not yet been received.

Welcome

Larry Ward welcomed the board members to Riverside and noted the importance of historical records to citizens. Other members of the public in attendance were introduced at this time by Chuck.

Approval of February 3, 2006 Minutes

Chuck asked for a change to the minutes concerning the description of the State Archives' processing backlog. A motion was made by Gary B., seconded by Leslie, to approve the minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Deputy Coordinator

Nancy announced the appointment of Laren Metzger as Deputy Coordinator.

State Agency Reports

State Library

Gary K. provided a report from the State Library. Proposition 81, the bond measure for public library construction was rejected by the voters on Tuesday.

The work of the California Cultural Endowment continues, although Gary noted he is not closely associated with this program.

The history section at the State Library has a project underway to put selected pictorial images on its web page.

A major renovation of the Library and Courts buildings will soon be underway. The \$60 million project will undertake long overdue needs of the facility, which was constructed in the 1920s.

Gary also indicated that the Sutro Library has a project underway with San Francisco State University to create a new library to house the Sutro's collections. The project is already behind schedule.

Gary met yesterday with UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies staff to discuss the development of a West Coast version of the Rare Books and Manuscripts School (RBMS).

State Archives

Nancy offered a summary about activities at the State Archives and referred members to her written report provided in advance. Nancy noted that the Secretary of State appointed her as State Archivist effective March 1, 2006. She is the first woman to serve in this capacity.

The Secretary of State has made electronic records and digital preservation a high priority for the agency. Nancy is spending much time leading the effort in these areas. She will be attending a national conference in Bellevue, Washington later this month. In addition, the State Archives is working jointly with the State Library on a project sponsored by the Library of Congress that will focus on regional efforts toward electronic records programs. The proposal from Arizona to develop a digital library and best practices seems to offer the best opportunity for participation by California.

Melissa Tyler has accepted a position at the State Archives to fill the vacancy created by Nancy's appointment. Melissa currently works at the University of California-Davis special collections. It is anticipated that she will begin work in early July.

The Regrant Project's first basic archives workshop was held yesterday in Sacramento. About thirty-three people attended the one-day program taught by State Archives' archivist, Blaine Lamb. Ten workshops will be offered altogether over the next two years with future programs in Ukiah, Chico, North Bay, South Bay, Fresno, Inland Empire, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Long Beach (in conjunction with the 2007 SCA annual meeting). The regional seminars were completed in March-April and were well received. Waverly inquired about the kinds of questions the attendees asked. Laren noted that participants were most concerned with what kinds of projects would be supported, how much money they could ask for, and what level of assistance would be available for preparing grants.

The State Archives' Geospatial Records Project, delayed due to administrative concerns, will begin in July. Federal funds have now been received in a state account.

Nancy summarized the efforts of the State Archives to date for Archives Month, which will be held in October of this year. The Archives will have an open house on October 7th followed by the annual family history day on October 14th. Nancy met recently with Shirley Burton, regional NARA administrator, to discuss collaborative efforts. Shirley indicated that NARA could take the lead in building support for Archives Month activities for the San Francisco bay area. The theme for this year's Archives Month will be "Celebrating California's Bountiful Historical Heritage". Nancy asked what role the board would like to take concerning Archives Month.

Waverly noted that the California Digital Library has content that should be linked to the Archives Month web site, which is part of the State Archives' web page. Chuck indicated that Riverside County had carried out its own activities for last year's Archives Week. He asked how many posters had been printed last year by the State Archives and noted the importance of outreach to local communities. Nancy replied that the State Archives was currently working on a design for the poster and that about 450 had been printed last year. NARA has asked that a much larger quantity be printed this year to allow for distribution to federal agencies.

Gary B. underscored the need for a business plan to provide goals and structure for the activities. He noted the importance of networking with local officials. Nancy summarized the awareness and advocacy efforts at the national level that are being coordinated by the Council of State Archivists. Gary B. underscored the need to work with the State Dept. of Education and outreach to schools. Charles noted the need to focus on a message and purpose that would benefit local organizations. We need to provide them with posters that can be individualized so that a local organization can link Archives Month to local activities. Nancy noted that there is no budget for Archives Month so money is an issue. The Society of California Archivists (SCA) underwrote the costs of the posters last year and has agreed to provide similar support this year. Laren said that the board would have about \$1000-1500 left in its administrative grant after covering meeting expenses this year. There was general agreement that the board should use this money to support Archives Month.

Waverly indicated that it would be beneficial to develop a kit that could be distributed widely to local organizations. The kit could include a cover letter, a list of potential activities, and a disk that contained a poster that could be individualized and printed. After some discussion, it was conceded that there might not be enough time to create a comprehensive kit for this year, but one could be developed for 2007. Laren noted that advisory boards are very active in promoting Archives Week/Month events in other states. Jim said that the promotion of events is crucial and that the board needed to work with local organizations to sponsor activities. Laren noted that a checklist of potential activities had been distributed with the poster in 2005. The mailing list included all county administrators, all county clerks and recorders, all county libraries, selected historical repositories and city clerks, and state legislators. Chuck suggested that the board might want to network with the International Institute of Municipal Clerks because of its interest in records and the connections to California city clerks. Chuck noted that several of the city clerks had participated in an archives and records management workshop in May at which he and Jennifer had made presentations.

Charles stressed the need for local organizations to get something out of Archives Month or they are unlikely to participate. Publicity is a key in whatever the board decides to do. Chuck noted the importance of sending materials to resource allocators and not just to record-keepers. Gary B. stressed the need to involve the corporate community, in particular, in raising funds to support publicity and events. Jennifer noted the SCA's speaker's bureau had not been very successful and had problems/issues similar to Archives Month. Having a list of speakers available to talk to local organizations could be very valuable.

Jim asked the public members in attendance what sort of activities they would find useful. Larry said that it would be beneficial to have a media event to link to in order to raise awareness about records. Marion noted the value of networking with other local organizations and family history workshops. Individualized posters and sample resolutions would also be useful in order to establish contact with local media. Anne described her experiences in Vermont and noted that piggybacking with statewide events can be effective. She talked about the "Archives on the Road" program where records professionals provide on site evaluations of historical materials for the public.

Gary B. indicated that the Museum for History, Women, and the Arts should be involved as well as media personalities such as Huell Howser. Leslie noted the importance of developing a logo for Archives Month. Waverly indicated that a statewide steering committee could be a useful organizational structure, but this would likely not be possible for this year. Charles said that the board should look to develop a plan for the next two years with specific goals and objectives.

Nancy summarized the illness of former State Archivist and State Coordinator Walter Gray and said that a card would be sent to him on behalf of the board.

Nancy noted that the State Archives is nearly ready to launch its on-line public catalog, Minerva.

The backlog project is still in the state budget. It is anticipated that the project will get underway late summer with the hiring of students.

The Archives is working on revising its emergency preparedness plan and will be using tools developed for this purpose by the Council of State Archivists.

Nancy described her recent visit to UCLA and her meeting with Alan Weinstein, Archivist of the United States. Dr. Weinstein expressed a desire to strengthen the relationship between NARA and California and suggested partnering with UCLA to develop educational programs. Some of these efforts could have connections to the State Archives.

Board Projects

Regrant Project

Laren noted the need to develop lists of consultants and vendors in response to inquiries from potential grant applicants. The board discussed this issue at length and concluded that despite the difficulties in listing consultants, it would be useful for the board to develop a list that would

include a disclaimer about the quality of work performed. The list could be made available at the State Archives' web site. In addition, the board could create a checklist that would assist applicants in knowing what questions to ask consultants and what qualities they should possess.

Administrative Grant

Laren noted that the board would need to submit a new application to NHPRC by September 1, 2006 to support meetings in 2007. The grant will likely be for \$7500, the same amount of the current grant. Chuck recalled that the board couldn't request NHRPC funding to cover meeting expenses indefinitely. Chuck made a motion, seconded by Gary K., to expend any remaining funding from the grant, not to exceed \$1500, in support of Archives Month. The motion was carried unanimously.

Other Items

Archivist Award of Excellence

Nancy inquired about the board's continuing interest in the Archivist Award of Excellence now that the California Heritage Preservation Commission no longer exists. Charles indicated that the Commission, in view of its imminent termination, asked SCA to assume full responsibility for the award. SCA did in fact assume such responsibility, including sponsorship, administration, and funding. There ensued some discussion about the respective roles of the board and SCA with a general consensus emerging that the board wished to have some role in the award. Charles made a motion, seconded by Chuck, that Nancy should write a letter on behalf of the board to the SCA President exploring SCA's interest in permitting some form of participation by the board in the award effort and discussing possible ways in which the award might be jointly administered and/or sponsored by the board and SCA. The motion carried unanimously.

CAM Representative

The California Association of Museums has appointed Jim Henley, Manager of History and Science Division, City of Sacramento, as its representative to the board. Jim will begin his participation with the October meeting of the board.

Recording of Minutes

Chuck recommended that the minutes be recorded. This allows State Archives staff to refer to the actual discussion when details may not be clear and allows all members of the board to fully participate. The official record of board meetings will be the written minutes as approved by the board at the following meeting. The recorded minutes will not be permanently retained.

Board Liaisons

Waverly inquired about the role of board liaisons for NHPRC and regrant applicants. After some discussion, it was agreed that Nancy would contact NHPRC to get guidance on this issue.

Conflict of Interest

A discussion ensued regarding potential problems with board members serving as consultants for NHPRC or regrant projects. The bylaws now prohibit board members from reviewing and voting on any NHPRC grant application from an organization with which they have an affiliation. The board reached a consensus that this prohibition should be strengthened by forbidding board members from serving as consultants on regrant projects. An amendment to the existing bylaws will be circulated in the near future incorporating this new language. A teleconference meeting will be convened prior to the October meeting to vote on the amendment.

October Meeting

The October meeting of the board will be held in San Jose on Thursday, October 26th beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.